15th February 1958]

THE HON. SRI M. BHAKTAVATSALAM : (*a*) The Madras Government had no stock of rice with them. The supply of rice to the fair price shops in the State was made by the Regional Director (Food), Madras, from Central stocks held in the State.

(*b*) The number of fair price shops functioning in the State during 1957 varied from time to time. There were about 2,000 fair price shops during January 1957 which was reduced to 665 in February. Thereafter the number fluctuated and gradually increased to 935 shops at the end of September 1957. From 1st October 1957 the number was reduced by 50 per cent and there were only 483 fair price shops during October and upto 25th November 1957. Again the number of shops was increased and there were about 750 fair price shops functioning at the end of December 1957.

(*c*) A quantity of 66,904 tons of rice was supplied to the fair price shops in the State by the Regional Director (Food), Madras, during 1957.

Up to 25th November 1957, the Regional Director (Food), Madras, was issuing wheat to merchants including fair price shopkeepers for sale to consumers. Information regarding the quantity of wheat supplied to fair price shopkeepers alone upto 25th November 1957 is not available. From 25th November 1957 the Government ordered that wheat should also be issued to consumers from fair price shops. The quantity of wheat issued to the fair price shops from 25th November 1957 upto 31st December 1957 was 3,656 tons.

(*d*) The retail issue price of rice (II sort) from the fair price shops at different centres in the State ranges from 71 nP. to 75 nP. per Madras measure. American fine rice is now being issued temporarily through fair price shops in Madras City. The retail issue price of this rice is 85 nP. per Madras measure.

* 129 *Q.*—SRI V. K. KOTHANDARAMAN : Will the Hon. the Minister for Home be pleased to state the number of fair price shops opened during the year 1957 in the State, district-wise?

THE HON. SRI M. BHAKTAVATSALAM : The attention of the honourable Member is invited to the answer to clause (*b*) of Starred Question No. 128 of Sri N. K. Palanisami, M.L.A.

A statement* showing the number of fair price shops functioning in the State district-wise at different periods during 1957 is placed on the table of the House.

* 130. *Q.*—SRI V. K. KOTHANDARAMAN : Will the Hon. the Minister for Home be pleased to state whether the Government have any proposals to start fair price shops in Vellore and Ambur (North Arcot district)?

THE HON. SRI M. BHAKTAVATSALAM : No, Sir.

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* Printed as Appendix on page 574 infra.